

Goodwin's Weekly

Vol. XV

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, SEPTEMBER 25, 1909

No. 21

WELCOME TO THE PRESIDENT

ALL HAIL and warm welcomes to President Taft. Those welcomes began on Massachusetts Bay, close by where the first hymn of Liberty was chanted in what is now New England. With increasing volume they have been rolling westward. Across the Hudson, the Niagara, around the Great Lakes; they rose to a mighty roar in the metropolis of the old west and in the Twin Cities. On and on over the Mississippi and Missouri, over oceans of ripened harvests and the welcomes which were a paean in Boston soon became an acclaim that filled all the air and took on the tones of a triumphal march.

It is said that if mortal ears could be sublimated they could, on a soft night, hear the refrain of the anthems which the axes of the stars, each set to a different key, but all rolling in harmony, play as they make their nightly voyages in the seas of ether.

If that is a fashion of Nature, then, maybe, there is a rhythm to the chariot wheels which bear our island commerce and which we cannot catch the full significance of, and that as the train bore the chief executive up the eastern slope of the great mountains of mid-continent, they, too, were chanting welcomes all through the hours.

If the strain has lessened a little in volume here, it has lost none of its fervor.

Of old, it was said, "To be a Roman citizen was greater than to be a king." If that was true, then to be the President of the United States is greater than a full assemblage of kings.

Think of it! Ninety millions of free men, selecting from all the host, one who should be their standard-bearer.

Was ever anything so stately and so majestic ever seen before on this old planet?

And that standard-bearer is here and Utah greets him.

There is no faltering in the welcome.

Before he left the eastern seashore he declared that the chief purpose of his proposed journey was that he might look all the people in the face and obtain a better knowledge of them.

In each of the thousands of faces upturned to his in Utah we are sure that there will not be one in which he cannot read that his coming is most welcome.

The sunshine fills the valley with its light and turns to splendor the mountains that surround it; the desert puts by its frown and breaks into flowers at his feet, and the hearts of all the people go out to him in good will, and they would, if they could, make this such as the other city seemed. "A capital of some enchanted land," and "also have the criers pass with drum and gong, proclaiming loudly: 'Ho, all citizens! The king commands that there be seen today no evil sight, let no one blind or maimed, none that is sick or stricken deep in years, no leper and no feeble folk go forth,' until our guest, looking on, should say:

"Fair is the world, it likes me well
And light and kind these men"

Thus would the people show the heartiness of their greeting. And the special reason is, above the full good will to him, the reverence in which they hold his great office and their faith that in that office he will never for an hour forget its great responsibilities, or while he holds it his obligations that law shall rule, that peace if possible with honor, shall be maintained, that impartial justice shall prevail, and that the freedom which the fathers bequeathed shall be secure to every soul beneath the flag.

We hope that he will be convinced that the men of Utah appreciate that freedom, and that with it guaranteed them, they are doing their part to keep their star on the flag flaming without a shadow upon it, and that the flag itself in Utah is kept "full high advanced," a beacon light of hope for all her children, a something to live for, a something sacred enough, if needs be, to die for.

The President has rounded the world; he has studied men under all conditions; he ought to be as good a judge of the motives that underlie the souls of men as anyone, and we are sure that in Utah he will be convinced that no welcome that has been given him has come from hearts more sincere than those of Utah.

We hope he will have time to note the industries which occupy the people here, that sometimes the thought will come to him that all the land he has traveled over for the last thousand miles and for a thousand miles further west was but a trackless and savage waste only half a century ago, and that the reason it is changed now has been only because there are no limitations on free men.

Before their high purpose and their strong arms, the hills open their adamant vaults and give up their treasure; touched by their enthusiasm, the Desolation that kept guard over the desert's gems spreads its black wings and soars away, the streams turn in their course to touch with life the desert and it grows yellow with harvests; the cottage rises and vines entwine it and the voices of children mingle with the glad songs of the birds that come to hail the transformation.

And temples rise in the paths of the Pioneers; temples to Religion, to Education, to Justice, to Industry, to Freedom and to Peace, and what but a little before was but savagery becomes a new signal station for civilization and enlightenment.

This is the miracle which the fathers slowly wrought all the way from the eastern sea to this side the Father of Waters.

Then steam and electricity came, with arms of steel and of fire, to take away some of the burdens from the arms of flesh, and then more swift were the changes.

Finally the vitalizing force in the world's work was found, the streams, the solemn mountains and the repellent desert began to give up their precious metals and a new progress seized and subdued the wilderness, and before it the savage beast retired, savage men became overawed and humble, before it the frontier itself gave up its fastnesses and fled.

And so at last the way was made smooth and civilization on unsoiled sandals came to build her temples.

And today the people from a thousand homes draw near and with glad hearts and generous lift up their voices to salute and welcome their Chief Magistrate and to wish him all happiness here and continued happiness and safety on his way.